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AGO D/A ltr dtd 29 Apr 1980; AGO D/A ltr dtd 29 Apr 1980	

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (10 Jul 68) FOR OT RD 682040

17 July 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 54th Artillery Group, Period Ending 30 April 1968. (U)

AD391831

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1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT RD, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.
2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

*Kenneth G. Wickham*

KENNETH G. WICKHAM  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General

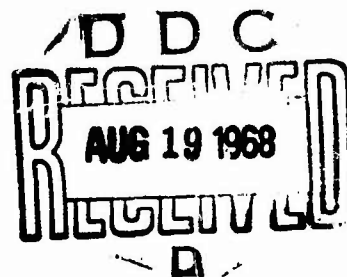
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 54TH ARTILLERY GROUP  
APO San Francisco 96376

MAY 1 1968

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SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968,  
Reports Control Symbol CSFOR-65

THRU: Commanding General  
II Field Force Vietnam Artillery  
ATTN: AVFB-FAC  
APO 96266

Commanding General  
II Field Force Vietnam  
APO 96266

Commanding General  
United States Army Vietnam  
ATTN: AVHGC-DH

Commander-In-Chief  
United States Army Pacific  
ATTN: GPOP-DT

TO: Department of the Army  
ATTN: ACSFOR, DA  
Washington, D. C. 20310

## SECTION I

### SIGNIFICANT ORGANIZATIONAL AND UNIT ACTIVITIES

#### 1. (C) Personnel and Administration:

a. The 54th Artillery Group remained assigned as a major subordinate command of USARV with headquarters at Xuan Loc (YT467089). Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam Artillery retained operational control of the Group.

b. The mission of the 54th Artillery Group was: General Support II Field Force Vietnam.

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c. The 54th Artillery Group mission, as stated in para 1b above, continues to cause units within the Group to operate in an area in excess of 10,000 square kilometers. As previously reported, the distance between Group Headquarters, subordinate battalions, and dispersed firing batteries, complicates command control functions. Firing batteries were located an average distance of 30 kilometers from their parent battalions, and in one case, a firing battery was located a distance of 190 kilometers from battalion headquarters.

d. Command changes: LTC Wallace W. Noll assumed command of the 7th Bn, 9th Artillery from LTC Robert C. Breckenridge on 17 Apr 68.

e. The 1st Bn, 83d Artillery was attached to Headquarters, Provisional Corps Vietnam, during the reporting period. The battalion completed its move to the 1st Corps Tactical Zone on 22 Mar 68. (See note on battalion's move at Section II, Item 2g).

f. During the reporting period, a 155mm howitzer(towed) battalion, the 5th Battalion, 42d Artillery, was assigned to the 54th Artillery Group. The battalion is commanded by LTC Harry L. Sutton Jr, with personnel strength of 32 officers, 4 warrant officers, and 548 enlisted men. The battalion advance party consisting of the battalion commander, the battery commanders and 19 other personnel arrived in country on 13 Apr 68. The remainder of the battalion personnel arrived aboard the USNS General Barrett at Vung Tau on 25 Apr 68, with equipment arriving at Newport on 30 Apr 68. The 7th Bn, 9th Artillery sponsored the new battalion for the 54th Artillery Group. The 5th Bn, 42d Artillery received its training at Fort Bragg, N. C. and has been assigned a base camp location at Bearcat (YT177002).

## g. SI Activities:

(1) Infusion: When the 1st Bn, 83d Artillery received notification to deploy to the DMZ, an infusion program was implemented. Each member of the 1st Bn, 83d Artillery with a DEROS within 45 days of deployment date was replaced from units within the Group. A total of 76 men were replaced in this manner. The replacement plan was implemented and completed in six days.

(2) Levies: During the report period nine individuals were levied by HQ USARV for assignment to MACV and Provisional Corps, Vietnam. Four lieutenants from the Group were committed to MACV, while one major, two captains, one lieutenant, and one Sergeant Major were assigned to PCV.

## h. Personnel strength on last day of reporting period was:

UNIT	AUTH			ASG		
	OFF	WO	EM	OFF	WO	EM
HQB, 54th Arty Gp	15	1	90	23	1	100

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<u>UNIT</u>	<u>AUTH</u>			<u>ASG</u>		
	<u>OFF</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>EM</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>EM</u>
7th Bn, 8th Arty	27	4	534	27	5	527
7th Bn, 9th Arty	38	5	485	31	3	486
2d Bn, 35th Arty	33	4	574	29	3	580
1st Bn, 83d Arty	<u>31</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>544</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>599</u>
TOTALS	144	18	2227	138	16	2292

## i. Critical MOS shortages were:

<u>MOS</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>GRADE</u>	<u>AUTH</u>	<u>SHORT</u>
13B40	Howitzer Section Chief	E-6	88	4
36K40	Wire Team Chief	E-5	35	5
31G40	Communications Sergeant	E-6	17	2

## j. Personnel changes during this quarter were:

<u>GAINS</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>EM</u>	<u>LOSSES</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>EM</u>
	19	2	532		22	2	369

## k. Casualties:

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
Killed in Action	5
Wounded in Action	85
Non-Battle Dead	2
Non-Battle Casualties	17

## l. Pertinent Medical Service Statistics were:

Total Patient Visits:	2085
Admitted to Hospital:	89
Malaria Cases:	0

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## m. Awards and Decorations:

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
Silver Star	3
Legion of Merit	2
Soldiers Medal	2
Bronze Star	34
Air Medal	24
Army Commendation Medal	34
Purple Heart	89

## n. Judicial and non-judicial actions:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>ART 15</u>	<u>SCM</u>	<u>SPCM</u>	<u>GCM</u>
HNB, 54th Arty Gp	3	0	0	0
7th Bn, 8th Arty	14	0	1	0
7th Bn, 9th Arty	14	1	1	0
2d Bn, 35th Arty	13	1	1	0
1st Bn, 83d Arty	<u>32</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTALS	76	2	6	0

## o. Reportable accidents:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>VEHICLE</u>	<u>AIRCRAFT</u>	<u>PERSONNEL</u>
HNB, 54th Arty Gp	0	0	0
7th Bn, 8th Arty	2	0	0
7th Bn, 9th Arty	2	0	0
2d Bn, 35th Arty	4	0	4
1st Bn, 83d Arty	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTALS	9	0	4

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## p. R&amp;R (Out-of-country and in-country):

## (1) Out-of-country:

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>
Hawaii	30	36	40
Hong Kong	22	22	10
Bangkok	25	26	20
Australia	21	27	19
Manila	4	5	2
Taipei	21	22	14
Tokyo	10	12	8
Singapore	7	8	8
Penang	8	7	8
Kuala Lumpur	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>
TOTALS	154	171	133

## (2) In-country (Vung Tau):

	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>
OFF	2	2	2
EM	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>
TOTALS	22	22	22

## q. Safety:

(1) There were nine vehicle accidents in the group during the reporting period. In order to eliminate such accidents, the following preventive policies have been established:

(a) That all vehicles receive a technical inspection prior to dispatch and that DA Form 2404 be completed noting any deficiencies. Any deficiency causing an unsafe condition must be corrected prior to dispatch. The driver must have a DA Form 2404, in addition to a DA Form 2400, signed by the unit commander or his designated representative, prior to departing on dispatch.

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(b) That a sergeant (E-5 or above) accompany any convoy numbering five (5) vehicles or less and that an officer must accompany six (6) vehicles or more.

(c) That all convoy NCOIC's and drivers are briefed, prior to movement, on road conditions and specific hazards.

(2) Great emphasis has been placed on the importance and necessity for excellence in firing in order to insure immediate, accurate fire support and to prevent artillery accidents and incidents. Specific actions taken are contained in para 3, Training and Organizations, of this report.

## r. Annual General Inspection:

An Annual General Inspection was administered to Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 54th Arty Group by the USARV AGI Team from 15 to 17 April 1968. Based on ratings of satisfactory or unsatisfactory, the Group Headquarters, and Headquarters Battery, were rated satisfactory.

## s. Commander's Note:

The 54th Artillery Group had no organic aviation section; but was allocated two UH1D Helicopters daily and one additional helicopter for one half day, every other day. Command and staff visits, liaison missions, personnel moves, mail delivery, DEROS and R&R moves, and critical repair parts shipments are all typical daily missions required to properly manage a force of approximately 2400 personnel scattered from Xuan Loc to Dong Tam in the Mekong Delta. Helicopter support continues to be inadequate.

## 2. (C) Operations:

a. During the reporting period, units of the Group participated in the operations listed below, in support of the 18th ARVN Division, 9th Infantry Division, 25th Infantry Division, 101st Airborne Division, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 1st Royal Australian Task Force, 1st Royal Thai Volunteer Regiment, the 199th Light Infantry Brigade and the 1st Air Cav Division.

<u>OPERATION</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>UNIT</u>
TEY Truce Offensive	Feb 68	All 54th Gp Units
Uniontown	Feb 68	A/2/35
Buena Vista	Feb 68	A/2/35
Cchurg	Feb 68	B/2/35 A/7/9 B/1/83

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<u>OPERATION</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>UNIT</u>
Coronado	Feb 68	C/2/35
Jeb Stuart	Feb - Mar 68	B/1/83
Battle of Hue	Feb - Mar 68	B/1/83
Harrisburg	Mar 68	B/2/35
Box Springs	Mar 68	B/2/35 C/2/35
Pinaroo	Mar - Apr 68	A/2/35 A/1/83
Wilderness	Mar - Apr 68	B/2/35 A/1/83
Pegasus	Mar - Apr 68	B/1/83
Farrell	Apr 68	C/2/35
Relief of Khe Sanh	Apr 68	B/1/83
Toan Thang	Apr 68	B/2/35 C/2/35 A/7/9 C/7/9

b. The number of missions and rounds fired in 54th Arty Group during the reporting period were:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>MISSIONS</u>	<u>ROUNDS</u>
7th Bn, 8th Arty		
8"	13067	27104
175mm	6845	10777
7th Bn, 9th Arty		
105mm	7561	42087
2d Bn, 35th Arty		
155mm	12605	58176

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<u>UNIT</u>	<u>MISSIONS</u>	<u>ROUNDS</u>
1st Bn, 83d Arty		
8"	5852	21935
175mm	<u>3363</u>	<u>6942</u>
TOTALS	49293	167021

c. During the TET Offensive, all units of the 54th Arty Group were involved either directly or indirectly. During the period 29 Jan to 18 Feb 68, the following results were obtained:

(1) Enemy killed by artillery or small arms:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>ARTILLERY</u>	<u>SMALL ARMS</u>
7th Bn, 8th Arty	143 (183 poss)	0
7th Bn, 9th Arty	57	2
2d Bn, 35th Arty	26 (96 poss)	0
1st Bn, 83d Arty	<u>160</u> (200 poss)	<u>0</u>
TOTALS	386 (479 poss)	2

(2) US casualties:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>
7th Bn, 8th Arty	0	9
7th Bn, 9th Arty	1	13
2d Bn, 35th Arty	1	32
1st Bn, 83d Arty	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTALS	2	54

d. The 1968 Battle of Xuan Loc:

(1) There were two US Artillery firing units located in Xuan Loc during the reporting period. Battery C, 7th Bn, 9th Artillery, was located in HQ, 2d Bn, 35th Artillery's compound, north of the 54th Artillery Group HQ. Battery C, 1st Bn, 83d Artillery, was located in their own compound near the Xuan Loc Airstrip, south of the 54th Artillery Group Headquarters. At 020120 Feb, HQ/2/35, C/7/9, and MACV's compound came under a

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small arms and mortar attack. Within 10 minutes elements all over the Xuan Loc area were under heavy mortar attack. The counter-mortar plan was initiated immediately. Almost all friendly elements were receiving small arms and mortar fire. As the attack continued, defensive concentrations, on call illumination, and contact missions were fired. The actual attack continued throughout the night, decreased in intensity during the daylight hours, then resumed in force at 022200H Feb and continued throughout the second night.

(2) The accuracy and response of the US artillery fire were outstanding. This was substantiated in various ways during conversations with and communications from the Long Khanh Sector Advisor, the 18th ARVN Division G-3 Advisor, the 18th ARVN Division Artillery Advisor, and the 52d Ranger Battalion Commander.

(a) The accuracy can be attributed to training devices, such as, gunnery and firing battery tests, inspections, and constant OJT conducted throughout the Group.

(b) The immediate response of the artillery fire was due to many factors.

1. Clearance of fires was expedited. The coordination between all units involved was outstanding.

2. The 54th Artillery Group Operations Center received, plotted, assigned, controlled, and coordinated all US artillery indirect fire missions. The Group Operations Center, in conjunction with the 18th ARVN Division Artillery TOC, assigned the priority of fires. Missions were assigned and the observer and firing battery were brought together on the proper frequency. Double check safety procedures were used in receiving, plotting, clearing, and transmitting the missions to the firing batteries.

3. The firing units also used the double check system in processing the missions. As a result, accuracy and safety were not sacrificed for rapid response. Very close artillery support was fired with no incidents or accidents throughout the entire battle, despite the fact that the majority of these close support missions were fired while the firing batteries were under heavy mortar and small arms fire.

4. As more intelligence was received prior to and after the two attacks, the number of H&I fires was increased. In addition, counter-mortar and counter-rocket targets were often fired as H&I's.

5. Defensive concentrations, final protective fires, and on call illumination for 54th Artillery Group HQ, 2/35 compound, C/1/83 compound, MACV compound, Long Khanh Sector compound, 18th ARVN Div compound, and Blackhorse Base Camp had been preplanned and were fired by the appropriate units during the battle.

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(c) The following procedures have been put into effect in the Xuan Loc area since the battle terminated:

1. Four new target lists have been planned and will be fired in the event of an attack. Preplanned assembly area targets will be fired first, providing sufficient prior warning is obtained. Secondly, preplanned infiltration route targets will be fired until more specific intelligence dictates otherwise. Preplanned on call defensive concentrations will be fired if called for and an attack is actually initiated. Preplanned withdrawal route targets will be fired as the enemy withdraws from the area.

2. A 1:25,000 scale firing chart has been placed in the 54th Group TOC with surveyed operation tower locations plotted on it. These towers are manned during the hours of darkness. Spotting from these locations with azimuth and range, can be plotted to pinpoint the enemy mortar and rocket locations.

3. The 175mm guns of C/1/83 are registered with zone 1 at close range to aid in firing close-in counter-mortar targets.

4. Personnel bunkers have been increased and strengthened.

3. (C) Training and Organization:

a. A program for excellence in artillery techniques and procedures has been instituted to improve the responsiveness, timeliness, and accuracy of artillery fire with emphasis on the elimination of incidents and accidents. In the area of training the program consists of, but was not limited to, the following:

(1) Full use is being made of available metro and survey data. An attempt is always made to register with every charge likely to be used from a given position. These registrations are conducted concurrently with a metro message in order to utilize a met + VE GFT setting when unable to register, and to determine average position VE's. If the situation limits the number of charges that can be fired in a registration, all batteries have been instructed to utilize experience factors and position VE's to compute corrections to appropriate met check points.

(2) The double check system has been taught and established in every firing battery, to be followed throughout the entire artillery fire delivery system. This system includes receipt of fire requests, clearance procedures, calculation of firing data, transmission of data to the guns, location and laying of the battery, setting off the data on the weapons, and handling ammunition and powder charges.

(3) Each battalion has been required to incorporate the following training mechanisms into their mandatory training programs:

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(a) Administration of the gunner's test, prescribed in each weapon's basic field manual, to all firing battery officers, chiefs of firing batteries, howitzer section chiefs, and howitzer gunners and assistant gunners. The results of these gunner's tests are reported quarterly to 54th Artillery Group Headquarters.

(b) Administration of a fire direction gunnery examination to all battalion officers and all personnel assigned to or working in fire direction centers.

(c) Administration of a 54th Artillery Group examination concerning artillery fire clearance procedures and rules of engagement.

b. A three phase evaluation program that was initiated prior to this reporting period was completed during this period. A test and evaluation team was organized, consisting of two qualified gunnery officers: One to evaluate the firing battery and one to evaluate the fire direction and clearance procedures.

(1) During phase one, the test and evaluation team visited one battery from each battalion for approximately 24 hrs. A detailed report was presented to the Group and Battalion Commanders for corrective action.

(2) Phase two consisted of a two hour seminar conducted by the test and evaluation team for the Group Commander, Group Executive Officer, and Battalion S-3's. Topics of discussion included: Observation of evaluations conducted thus far, specific problem areas, assistance necessary, and planning for phase three.

(3) Phase three has been recently completed with the evaluation of all batteries in the Group having been accomplished. In addition to the formal 24 hr inspections, spot inspections of a considerably shorter length of time have been instituted in order to evaluate specific problem areas more frequently.

(4) This program has met with enthusiasm, cooperation, and appreciation from all concerned. The program's accomplishments have been significant in that no artillery incident or accident occurred for a period of four months following the institution of the evaluation program.

(5) Due to its obvious success, this program is being continued and a reinspection of all firing batteries in the Group is now in progress. In addition to evaluating and testing, on-the-spot instruction has been presented and immediate corrective action has been initiated where required.

c. Mandatory training was conducted in the following subjects: Command Information, Character Guidance, CBR Refresher, Civil Affairs, Safeguarding Defense Information, Survival, Escape and Evasion, Military Justice, Safety, Defense against Subversion and Espionage, and Armed Forces Censorship.

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d. Selected officers of the Group attended a one week course of instruction on the M18 Direction Computer (FADAC) given at Phu Loi (23d Arty Gp HQ) by the Pacific FADAC Assistance Team.

e. A two day forward observer school was conducted during the reporting period for selected personnel. The instruction included the artillery call for fire, shell and fuze combinations, map reading and actual adjustment of live rounds.

4. (C) Intelligence:

a. The 54th Arty Group S-2 Section began publishing a Daily Group Fragmentary Intelligence Summary on 26 Feb 68. The Battalion S-2's forwarded reports to Group HQ at 1200 hrs daily as a major source of this intsum. Copies of the Group Intsum are forwarded to each battalion of the Group and a copy is sent to II FFV Arty S-2.

b. Visual Reconnaissance:

(1) During the reporting period, support O-1 aircraft flew the missions indicated below:

<u>VR MISSIONS</u>	<u>HRS</u>	<u>CONVOY MISSIONS</u>	<u>HRS</u>	<u>W/A</u>	<u>REG</u>
581	1352	214	545	156	309

(2) The 54th Artillery Group conducted a three day Aerial Observer Orientation Course on 7 - 9 Feb 68 and 25 - 27 Mar 68. A total of 7 observers received instruction consisting of 1½ days of classroom work and 1½ days of practical exercises. The training course was designed to prepare selected individuals to become effective aerial observers for the purpose of gathering intelligence information and adjusting artillery fire.

5. (C) Logistics:

a. Supplies:

(1) All categories of supplies were available in satisfactory quantities during the period.

(2) Ten new M110 howitzers were received under the exchange program (closed loop) and one M110/M107 was received under the Product Improvement Program during this period. Numerous items of OVE continued to be missing when vehicles were received. DD Form 6 listing the missing items was filled out and forwarded

b. Maintenance: Artillery down-times for units assigned to 54th Artillery Group is shown below:

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<u>TYPE UNIT</u>	<u>AVAILABLE DAYS</u> (# WPNS x DAYS)	<u>%DOWN</u>
Lt	1620	1%
Med	1620	6%
Hvy	1608	3%

## c. Technical Assistance:

Due to a policy change the WECOM representative previously assigned to the 54th Artillery Group Headquarters is now assigned to the Direct Support Maintenance Battalion. The valuable assistance and technical advice that were provided by the previous WECOM representative have been definitely missed. We have recommended that a WECOM representative also be considered for assignment to this command to advise and assist in automotive problem areas.

## d. Repair Parts:

The supply of repair parts was generally good during this period, with the following exceptions:

(1) Reccil system on an M109 was deadlined for 19 days because of the non-availability of the following parts:

- (a) Seal Repair Kit (FSN 1025-937-2035) 1 ea.
- (b) Kit Repair (FSN 1015-928-6192) 1 ea.
- (c) Kit Seal Repair (FSN 1025-937-2034) 1 ea.
- (d) Motor Hydraulic (FSN 2520-674-1103) 1 ea.
- (e) Packing (FSN 5330-054-6925) 4 ea.
- (f) Bracket (#1092-5072) 1 ea.

(2) A recovery vehicle M578 was non-available for 38 days for the following part: Traversing Power Mechanism-part number 1090-4898.

## e. Maintenance Training:

The status of training for organizational mechanics and operators was enhanced during this period by "on the job" training provided at support maintenance facilities. The Product Improvement Program for M107/M110, M109 and M101's provided valuable experience and knowledge in the operation of equipment and proper maintenance procedures through assisting in the upgrading and repair of equipment with direct and general support maintenance personnel.

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f. Ammunition resupply by rounds and caliber included:

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>CALIBER</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>
HE	105mm	38560
ILL	"	2315
WP	"	1214
SMK	"	60
HE	155mm	54727
ILL	"	2156
WP	"	1557
HE	8"	39316
HE	175mm	<u>13956</u>

TOTALS:

153861

g. There were a total of 517 air resupply sorties flown during the reporting period.

h. Service battery ammunition trains traveled a total of 66404 miles during the reporting period.

6. (C) Organization: See organizational chart on following page.

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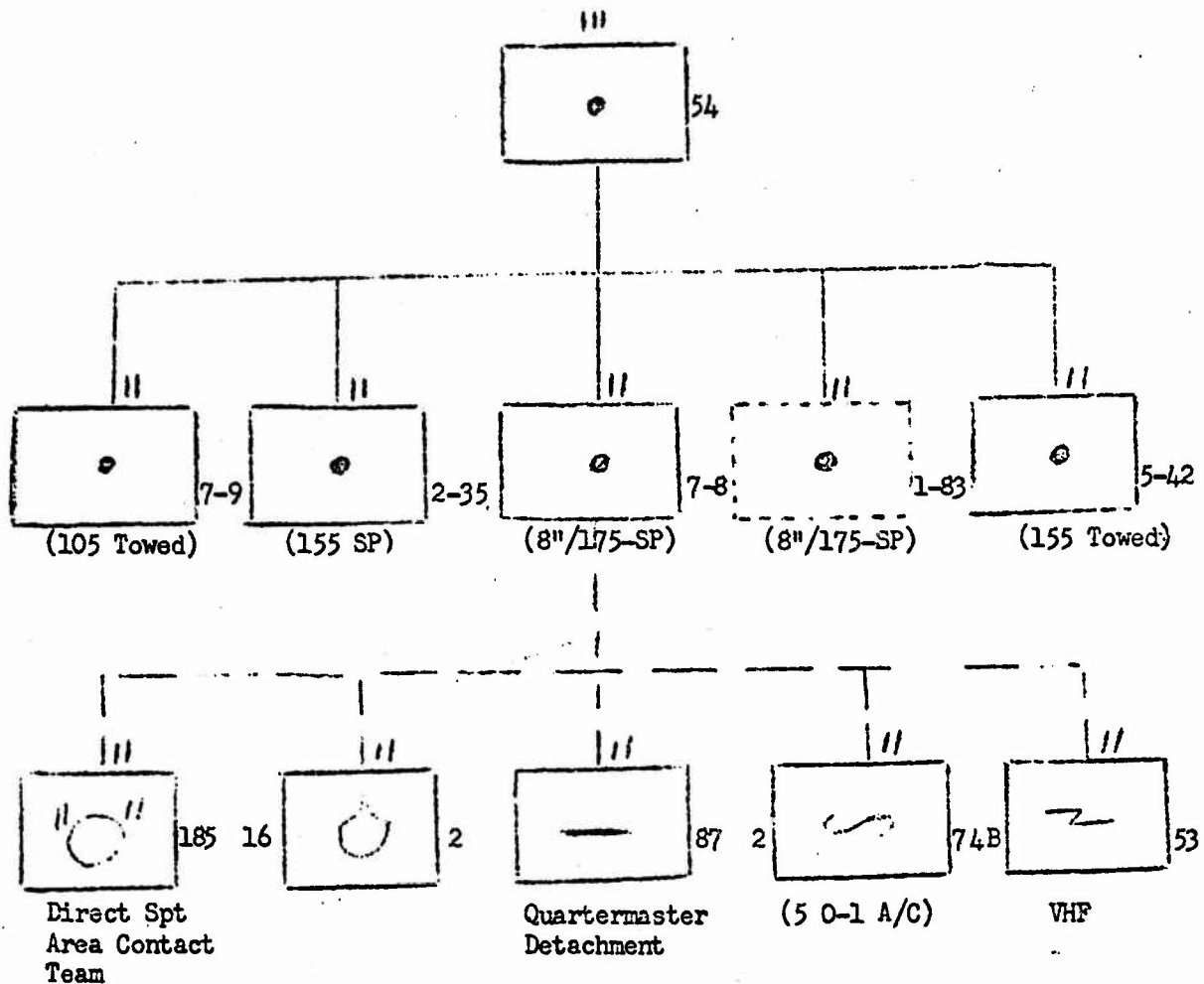
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SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968,  
Reports Control Symbol C3FOR-65

**LEGEND**

- Attached for rations and quarters
- Attached to Headquarters, Provisional Corps  
Vietnam, effective 22 Apr 68, HQ USARV General  
Order Number 1926, dtd 26 Apr 68.

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7. (C) Other:

a. Civic Actions:

(1) Major projects and civic action highlights for the period 31 January - 30 April 68 are listed below.

- (a) Building a bunker for the Xuan Loc Orphanage.
- (b) Repairing and improving Xuan Loc Provincial Hospital.
- (c) Reassignment of 2d Civil Affairs Team to MACORDS-Xuan Loc.
- (d) "TARP" fund drive was completed.
- (e) GVN Civil Recovery Program was initiated.

(2) CA Specifics of Projects Mentioned Above:

(a) During a survey of the area in Xuan Loc, the orphanage was found to have insufficient protection for the Nuns and children in case of mortar attacks. The temporary shelter that had been previously erected was dismantled and the entire bunker rebuilt utilizing additional support, sandbags, and bracing material.

(b) During this reporting period the 54th Artillery Group actively engaged in a major joint civic action project. The senior province Advisor had realized that a major need existed at the provincial hospital for repairs and improvements. The combined efforts of five US units were solicited for materials and manpower. Work is still in progress and to date the following major accomplishments have been achieved:

- 1. Screening of the surgical recovery ward.
- 2. Screening of convalescent ward.
- 3. Donation of an electrical cable for the operating

room.

(c) The 16th AA 2d Civil Affairs Team was reassigned to MACORDS during this reporting period. Under the new area concept of CA, they will be directed by MACORDS, but will be available to individual units for civil action coordination or advice, upon request. The loss of this team has limited the number of civic action construction projects that can be performed by this headquarters in the Xuan Loc area.

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(d) The "TARP" fund drive during Feb and Apr concluded with 661,152 piasters (US \$560.61) collected by the Group to be donated for use in the rebuilding program.

(e) Units of the 54th Group responded rapidly to requests from MACORDS for building supplies and equipment to be distributed to the Vietnamese in rebuilding their homes after the TET Offensive. In response to a letter from CG, II Field Force Vietnam, this headquarters directed all subordinate commanders to re-evaluate their current programs and to give their full support to the CVN program commensurate with their tactical requirements.

## (3) Future Objectives:

(a) During the month of May, English classes are to be resumed in the Xuan Loc area. The Chaplain and the Food Advisor of this headquarters have donated their services as instructors. These classes are to be conducted at the local high school three nights each week.

(b) The 54th Artillery Group will support RF - PF month (May 1968) by providing funds to purchase items to be placed in gift packs. The 54th Artillery Group Chaplains and their assistants will aid in preparing these gift packets for distribution to RF - PF outposts in Long Khanh Province.

## b. Communications:

(1) The Group Communications Center handled the reception of 832 RTT messages and transmitted 862.

(2) The Group Communications Section received two new AN/GRC-106 radios during the reporting period.

(3) During the period from 12 Feb 68 to 25 Mar 68, a USARV "MINIMIZE" was imposed to reduce use of telephones, RTT's and radios during an emergency period.

(4) The Group Communications Section laid a secondary communications line from 54th Artillery Group Compound to the 2d Bn, 35th Artillery Compound during the TET attacks on Xuan Loc.

## SECTION II

## LESSONS LEARNED: COMMANDER'S OBSERVATIONS, EVALUATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1. (U) Personnel and Administration:

## ITEM: Letters from Commanders to Civilian Homes:

OBSERVATION: Some problems have arisen from the fact that new arrivals in country do not notify their families of their assignment once it is determined.

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EVALUATION: This command has initiated the policy whereby the commanding officers of newly assigned personnel write a letter to the next of kin notifying them of their son's or husband's safe arrival in the command. The commanding officer's address is included so that the next of kin may write and ask any questions that may arise. This type of letter has met with favorable response and provides the families of assigned personnel with a more direct means of answering questions they may have.

## 2. (C) Operations:

### a. ITEM: Massing of Artillery

OBSERVATION: The capability of quickly and accurately massing several artillery units on enemy targets is desirable in order to demoralize and destroy the enemy.

EVALUATION: During February and March, the 54th Artillery Group executed TOT's based on sound and reliable intelligence, which resulted in 120 confirmed VC KIA, and 16 confirmed WIA. Initially the ARVN units in the Xuan Loc area were reluctant to participate in the TOT's because of the coordination required in massing as many as twenty-five artillery weapons on a single target. However, after observing the results of massed fire, the 18th ARVN Division and their advisors have become extremely enthusiastic regarding the surprise and devastating fire power that a well executed time-on-target can achieve. The isolated patrols and outposts which have observed these TOT's feel much more secure with the knowledge that this fire power is at their disposal when needed. It is also felt that the shock and surprise of as many as twenty-five artillery rounds ranging in size from 105mm to 175mm and 8 inch have a very demoralizing effect on the enemy.

### b. ITEM: Movement of 1st Bn, 83d Artillery to the DMZ.

OBSERVATION: Battery B was alerted on 4 Feb 68 for movement from Bien Hoa to the northern I Corps Tactical Zone and departed Newport by LST on 11 Feb 68. Battery A departed Vung Tau 17 Mar by LST and arrived at Da Nang on 20 Mar. Battery C departed Newport on 16 Mar and Headquarters and Service Battery departed on 18 March.

EVALUATION: The move of the battalion to the I CTZ was executed in accordance with a well conceived and carefully prepared plan prepared by the battalion with the assistance of the 54th Group. Although the move occurred on short notice and at a period of heightened activity, it was executed smoothly and without incident. Involved were the closing and transfer of three base camps and movement from four different tactical locations to two port areas.

## 3. (C) Training and Organization:

ITEM: Ammunition Malfunction

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OBSERVATION: Some difficulty has been encountered with malfunctions of ammunition when firing the M109 howitzer. These malfunctions included a "cock off", a premature burst, and erratic round to round variation.

EVALUATION: Upon careful study of the firing of the M109, it was decided that cannon gunnery practices required improvement. A strict program was initiated to enforce the following procedures:

- a. Provide shelter for the ammunition from the elements.
- b. Separate the propellant and projectiles by lot.
- c. Inspect rotating bands for burrs and cuts.
- d. Tighten the fuzes "wrench tight".
- e. Insure a good, hard, uniform ram with no mixing of power and hand ramming on the same mission.
- f. Maintain uniform placement of powder three (3) inches inside the breech so as to rest upon the "mushroom" when the breech is closed.
- g. Insure that "bore clear" is given after each round is fired.
- h. Insure that the maximum rate of fire is not exceeded.
- i. Insure that the mushroom is swabbed after each round.
- j. Insure that the primer vent and mushroom are reamed after each round.

Thus far the results have been outstanding since there have been no reports of ammunition malfunction for over four months.

#### 4. (C) Intelligence:

- a. ITEM: Protection of US personnel against rocket/mortar attacks.

OBSERVATION: Future Construction of sleeping quarters in RVN should include building overhead cover.

EVALUATION: Rocket and/or mortar attacks are increasing in Vietnam. Most of the attacks occur from 2200 hrs through 0300 hrs. Most of the living quarters in RVN do not provide adequate overhead cover for sleeping troops.

- b. ITEM: Registration of artillery:

OBSERVATION: In Vietnam the O-1 aircraft is used extensively for the accomplishment of the following missions:

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(1) To acquire intelligence information through planned, systematic, and thorough aerial visual reconnaissance.

(2) To recommend targets for attack by artillery and tactical air support.

(3) To adjust artillery fires within assigned areas of visual reconnaissance.

EVALUATION: The requirement for the extensive use of O-1 aircraft for conducting daily registration of artillery units limits its use for other important missions. This condition can be alleviated by the establishment of flash bases in permanent base camp locations and conducting high burst registrations. There are numerous places where artillery is co-located with or adjacent to AN/PQ4 Radars. By judicious planning, this radar can be used to register artillery without significantly detracting from the AN/PQ4's primary counter-mortar role. Within the 54th Artillery Group emphasis is being placed on the increased use of both visual and radar high burst registration techniques.

## 5. (C) Logistics:

ITEM: Transportation of repair parts:

OBSERVATION: A problem exists in attempting to provide the rapid distribution of repair parts to widely dispersed artillery units in order to maintain the operational readiness of artillery and automotive components. It would be desirable to establish a policy for the maintenance support element to transport repair parts to field locations of deadlined artillery weapons within 12 hours after the part has been located. However, the difficulty in establishing such a policy is understood due to the continuing shortage of helicopter assets available to support maintenance units.

EVALUATION: Nondivisional artillery units operating in remote areas have, on occasion, been subjected to excessive periods of weapon downtime due to the lack of responsive transportation to deliver artillery and automotive repair parts at any time or place, day or night. On several occasions a critical part has been located within a short period of time, but the weapon remained non-operational due to the lack of provisions for timely transportation.

## 6. (C) Organization: None

## 7. (C) Other:

### a. Civic Actions:

#### (1) ITEM: "Dud" Rounds:

OBSERVATION: A serious instances of "dud" mortars and other rounds have occurred causing serious injury to civilians.

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EVALUATION: Village chiefs and the Vietnamese people must be instructed to report "dud" mortars when they are found and not allow them to be brought into the village or even touched by children.

(2) ITEM: Effect of TET Offensive:

OBSERVATION: Instructional type classes, which were stopped during the TET attacks, are somewhat more difficult to resume.

EVALUATION: The people's interest must again be established. This is being accomplished through intense civil affairs work and increased contact and discussion with the people.

(3) ITEM: Joint US-Vietnamese Projects:

OBSERVATION: Projects undertaken by US units which do not share the work with the Vietnamese are likely to eventually fail or if completed, they will not be fully appreciated by the Vietnamese people.

EVALUATION: Participation by the Vietnamese in all CA activities is imperative. The Vietnamese must be encouraged to maintain maximum participation from the outset. As a project progresses increasing responsibility for its completion should be given to the Vietnamese.

b. Communications:

ITEM: Telephone Security:

OBSERVATION: During the TET Offensive, 54th Artillery Group received notice that some units in Vietnam had experienced the following:

(a) VC wire tapping.

(b) Field telephone, TA-312 and TA-43 were capable of passing audio even though the RT element had been placed securely in the cradle of the telephone.

EVALUATION:

(a) There were no signs of wire tapping on the Xuan Loc area.

(b) Tests were performed on all telephones to insure that they were secure.

RECOMMENDATION: In order to deter the tapping of wire lines, lines should be mounted on poles without steps. Tests, as prescribed in USARV Letter AVHCC-RM dated 20 Feb 68, Subj: Technical Evaluation of Field Telephones, Models TA-43 and TA-312, should be made to insure no faulty telephones are being used.

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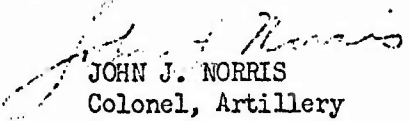
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968,  
Reports Control Symbol CSFOR-65

c. Medical activities:

ITEM: Secure Medical Bunker:

OBSERVATION: During recent mortar attacks in the Xuan Loc area, the use of a secure medical bunker in which emergency medical care can be rendered in relative safety as the attack continues, was found to be extremely useful. Due to the fact that enemy action continued for several hours, airo-evacuation could not be accomplished rapidly.

EVALUATION: With a secure, well supplied medical bunker, emergency medical care can be rendered when it is most needed.

  
JOHN J. NORRIS  
Colonel, Artillery  
Commanding

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AVFB-PAC (1 May 68) 1st Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned (RCS-CSPOR-65)

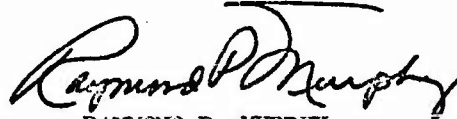
DA, HQ, II FORCEV Artillery, APO 96266

29 MAY 1968

THRU: Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam, APO 96266  
Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST,  
APO 96375  
Commander-In-Chief, United States Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-OT,  
APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of  
the Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

1. (U) The quarterly report of the 54th Artillery Group (UIC: WAO3AA) adequately reflects the operations and lessons learned during the reporting period.
2. (C) Observations and evaluations contained in Section 2 are considered valid Lessons Learned except paragraph 3 which reflects procedures contained in current field and technical manuals.
3. (U) Section 2, paragraph 7b. Concur.



RAYMOND P. MURPHY  
Brigadier General, USA  
Commanding

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AVFBC-RE-H (1 May 68) 2nd Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968  
Reports Control Symbol CSFOR-65.

DA, HQ II FFORCEV, APO San Francisco 96266 15 JUN 1968

THRU: Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC(DST), APO 96375

Commander, US Army Pacific, ATTN: CPOP-OT, APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

1. (U) Subject report is forwarded.
2. (C) This headquarters has reviewed the attached Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 54th Artillery Group and concurs with the report as indorsed, with the exception of para 7a(2)(c), Section I. Although the 16th AA Civil Affairs Platoon has been detached from the 54th Artillery Group and placed in direct support of the Long Khan Province Senior Advisor, this in no way should lessen the unit's capability to carry out civic action construction projects. The civil affairs platoon, regardless of its method of employment, is not staffed or equipped to carry out civic action projects on its own, but rather acts as a liaison or coordinating agency for all civic action within the province. The unit's S5, in coordination with the civil affairs platoon and utilizing his unit's capabilities, should be able to continue all desired civic action construction projects.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

OB For

O. B. FORRY  
1LT, APO  
16th AG

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AVHGC-DST (1 May 68) 3d Ind (U) CPT Arnold/nga/IBN 4485  
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968,  
Reports Control Symbol CSFOR-65

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 19 JUN 1968

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT,  
APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned  
for the quarterly period ending 30 April 1968 from Headquarters, 54th Artil-  
lery Group.

2. Concur with report as submitted.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

*C. S. Nakatsukasa*  
C. S. NAKATSUKASA  
Captain, AGC  
Assistant Adjutant General

Copy furnished:  
HQ, II FFORCEV  
HQ, 54th Arty Gp

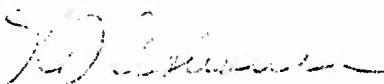
GPOP-DT (1 May 68) (U) 4th Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 54th Arty Gp for Period Ending  
30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 26 JUN 1968

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorsements and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



K. E. GUBBINS  
Maj, AGC  
Asst AG

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Security Classification

## DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R &amp; D

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